

Lowell Public Schools

Strategic Planning Update

April 30, 2020

1 + 4 Year Strategic Plan

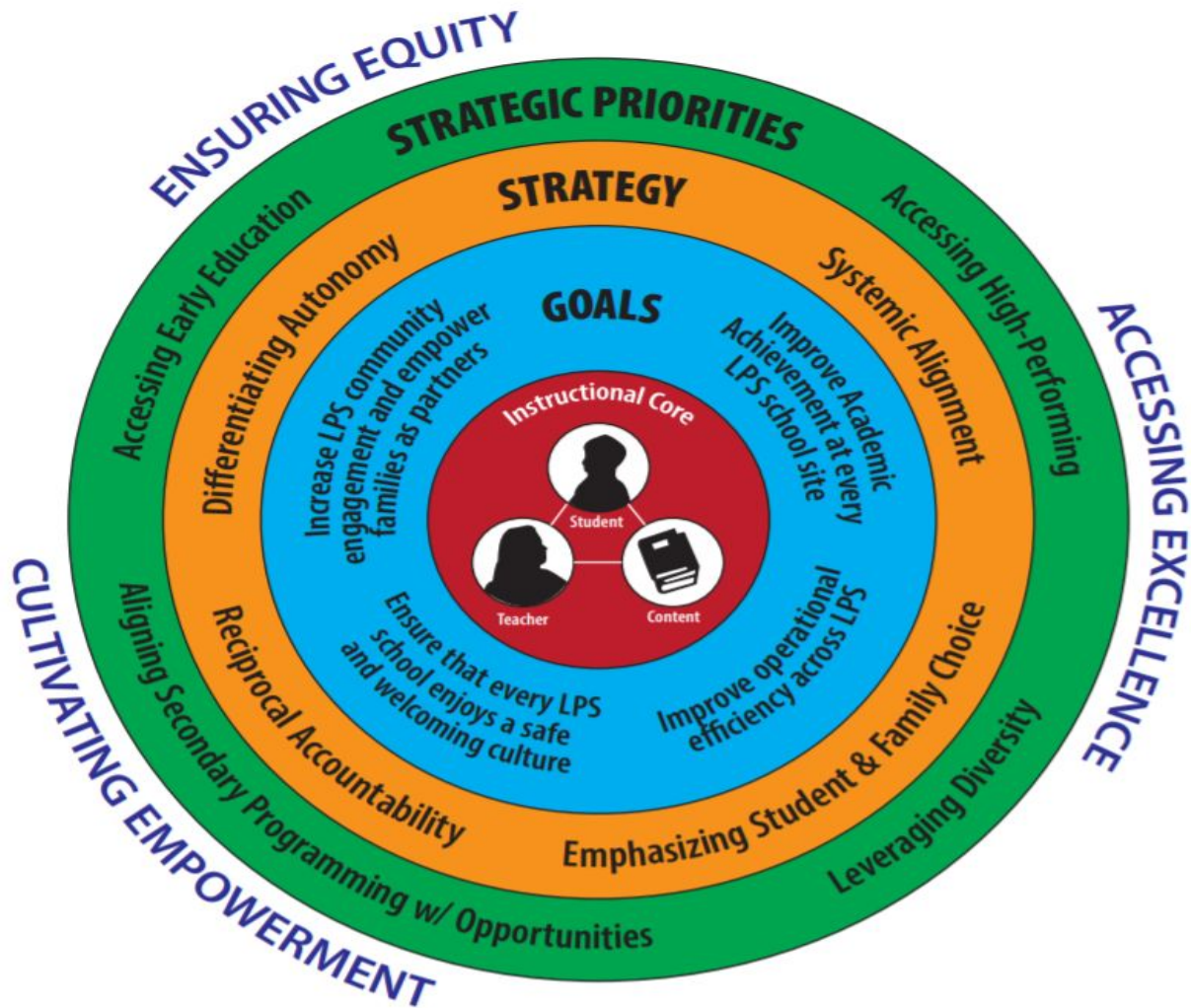
2020 – 2021 +





Strategic Planning Initiative: Developing the 1 + 4 Year Plan for the Lowell Public Schools

*Planning for a difficult
year while laying the
ground for future
progress.*



LPS Strategic Plan 2020 - 2021

Part I) Converting to a 1 + 4-year Plan

Part II) Summaries and Examples

Part III) Actionable Objectives and Measurable Outcomes

Part IV) Next Steps and Progress Monitoring

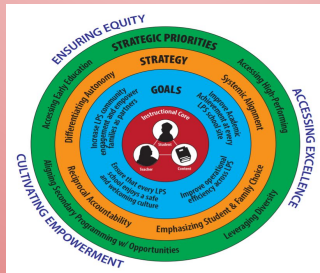
Part V) Appendix: Areas of Responsibility within LPS





Part I) Converting to a 1 + 4-year Plan:

1. What has changed/What has NOT changed (slide 5)
2. COVID-19: Responsiveness and readiness strategy (slide 6)
3. Core Beliefs; Core Beliefs; Strategy; Strategic Priorities (slide 7)
4. Overarching Goals (slide 8)
5. Factors Shaping Year One Plan (slides 9 - 10)





Strategic Planning Initiative: Developing the 1 + 4 Year Plan for the Lowell Public Schools

Understanding what has changed – and what has not – due to the COVID-19 public health crisis:

What has changed?

1. The need to respond to student needs stemming from the crisis.
2. Expectations about when and how we can implement the long-term changes we need.

- Budgetary **uncertainty** due to projected shortfalls in state revenue streams.
- Potentially **pronounced academic, social, and emotional needs** of students attributable to the abrupt disruption in traditional instructional delivery,
- Potentially significant wellness needs of students due to the **health and economic impact of the crisis on families.**
- The need to **prepare for potential future disruptions** and adjustments to our way of life due to the ongoing nature of the public health crisis.

What has NOT changed?

1. Why we are here.
2. What we believe.
3. What we have learned.
4. What is important.
5. What we need to do (now and later).

- **LPS Core Beliefs:** A quality education is a fundamental civil right for all students.
- **LPS Fundamental Commitments:** To eliminate opportunity and achievement gaps.
- **LPS Overarching Goals:** Improve academic achievement, ensure operational efficiency, create a welcoming culture, and empower community partners and families.
- **LPS Strategic Priorities:** To expand access to early learning and high-performing seats while aligning secondary programming with post-secondary opportunities and leveraging the diversity of the community to benefit LPS students.



Strategic Planning Initiative: Developing the 1 + 4 Year Plan for the Lowell Public Schools

COVID-19 public health crisis and related school closures has altered reality of LPS and the world.

While the 1 + 4 year plan envisions future progress, it is premised on a **four-part strategy of COVID-19 readiness and responsiveness.**

Physical Health:

LPS facilities will undergo robust disinfectant sanitation and other **enhanced cleaning tactics.**

Strict **hygiene requirements** will be imposed at all grade levels.

Logistical modifications will be made to account for any **physical distancing** strategies advised by public health officials.

Fiscal Prudence:

LPS will conduct itself with **heightened cautiousness** due to revenue uncertainties at both the state and municipal level.

All investments will be scrutinized for implications regarding **long-term goals** and any basis for **immediate urgency.**

Mental Wellness:

LPS will prioritize **trauma informed practices** in anticipation of students' mental health challenges precipitated by or exacerbated by the crisis.

School leaders will be advised on practices to **support both staff and families** experiencing anxiety related to the crisis.

SEL support systems will continue to be emphasized for the purpose of ensuring students' educational needs continue to be met in the wake of the 2020 closure and amid ongoing uncertainty.

Maintaining Flexibility:

LPS will employ strategies to **maintain programmatic and organizational flexibility** both to meet the needs of students in the wake of the 2020 closures and to ensure maximum adaptability to logistical challenges and/or additional disruptions during the 2020 - 2021 school year.



Strategic Planning Initiative: Developing the 1 + 4 Year Plan for the Lowell Public Schools

In converting from a 5-year planning process to a 1 + 4 year strategic plan focusing on next year's (2020 – 2021) actionable objectives, it is important that the principles of the long-term plan remain intact.

Core Beliefs:

- A high-quality education is a fundamental civil right of every child.
- Teaching and Learning is the core of work.
- Families are and students' first teachers.
- Sustainable school improvement requires hard and steady work over time.
- Every adult in the system is accountable for the success of all students; the entire community is responsible for their success.

Strategy:

- Employing differentiated levels of autonomy.
- Implementing systemic and instructional alignment.
- Empowering students and families through choice.
- Ensuring reciprocal accountability by all stakeholders.

Fundamental Commitments:

- Eliminate the racial, ethnic and linguistic achievement and opportunity gaps among all students.
- Provide equitable funding and resources among the district's diverse schools.
- Engage all families with courtesy, dignity, respect and cultural understanding.

Strategic Priorities:

- Increasing access to early learning opportunities.
- Increasing access to high-performing seats.
- Aligning secondary programming with post-secondary opportunities.
- Leveraging the rich diversity of the Lowell community to serve the interests of LPS students.

Strategic Planning Initiative: Overarching Goal Areas

Improve academic achievement at every LPS school site.	Improve operational efficiency across LPS.
Ensure that every LPS school enjoys a safe and welcoming culture .	Increase LPS community engagement and empower families as partners

These have not changed either.



Key Factors Shaping One-Year Strategic Plan

- ❑ Supports necessary to **mitigate academic, social, and emotional gaps** formed or exacerbated by the interruption to the 2019 – 2020 school year.
- ❑ Continuing 2019 - 2020 initiatives that are currently **gaining momentum** in advance of the district's overarching goals and long-term objectives.**
- ❑ Tactical approach toward short-term objectives that **establish groundwork** for additional steps in advance of overarching goals and that reflect the **learnings from the strategic planning process**.**
- ❑ Implementing strategies that account for **potential future disruptions** to traditional instructional delivery, i.e. blended learning strategies.
- ❑ Particular emphasis on zero and low cost objectives in light of the **budgetary uncertainty** now surrounding FY 2021.
- ❑ In short: **Continuity** of momentum and **stability** amid uncertainty



Strategic Planning Initiative: Developing the 1 + 4 Year Plan for the Lowell Public Schools

Continuing what has worked while factoring in what we've learned through strategic planning process:

Building momentum through continuity:

- Targeted supports within the Renaissance Network.
- Maintaining restored positions where possible.
- Focusing on school cultures and climate, their impact on student conduct/discipline.
- Fair Student Funding: schools know their students best.
- Development and use of school site councils.
- Data-driven strategies: grounding decisions in measurable and visualized

Incorporating what we have learned:

- Academic progress comes through social and emotional support.
- Digital divide must be bridged.
- High-need subgroups require specific and meaningful support: ELs and SWDs require additional strategies.
- Eager prospective partners all over Lowell want to support LPS.
- Improved communication strategies, premised on improved relationships will advance all goals.
- Increased equity and access to excellence requires a review of

Goals

Improve **academic achievement** at every LPS school site.

Improve **operational efficiency** across LPS.

Ensure that every LPS school enjoys a **safe and welcoming culture**.

Increase LPS **community engagement and empower families** as partners

Priorities

Increasing access to early learning opportunities.

Increasing access to high-performing seats.

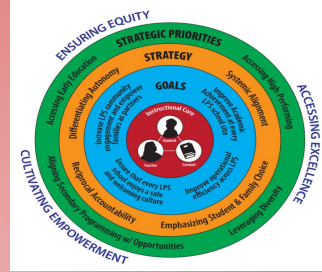
Aligning secondary programming with post-secondary opportunities.

Leveraging the rich diversity of the Lowell community to serve the interests of LPS students.



II) Summaries and Examples:

1. Year 1 Strategic Plan In-Brief (slide 12)
2. **Examples** of Actionable Objectives
 - a. Academic Achievement (slide 13)
 - b. Operational Efficiency (slide 14)
 - c. Safe/Welcoming Culture (slide 15)
 - d. Family/Community Empowerment (slide 16)
3. Year 1/Years 2-5 Breakdown (slides 17)
4. Nexus with Proposed FY 21 Operating Budget (slide 18)



1-year version of the Strategic Plan in Brief:

A series of actionable and meaningful objectives that reflect the Strategic Priorities and advance the district's overarching goals, yielding measurable progress and the momentum for continuous improvement by the Lowell Public Schools in subsequent years.

Goals

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Improve **operational efficiency** across LPS.

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Priorities

Increasing access to early learning opportunities.

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Leveraging the rich diversity of the Lowell community to serve the interests of LPS students.

**Strategic Planning Initiative:
Developing the 1 + 4 Year Plan for the Lowell Public Schools**

The following are illustration of how four specific objectives will be executed upon under the Strategic Plan:

Slide 14 - Structuring LPS response to **COVID-19**

Slide 15 - Expanding **career and technical** programming

Slide 16 - Improving **disciplinary landscape** through emphasis on school culture and climate.

Slide 17 - Developing the **First 2000 Day** Parent & Caregiver Support System

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Academics Work Group

Focused on instructional programming, including supports needed for SWDs and ELs.

Family Support Work Group

Focused on supports for families caring for students amid health and economic uncertainties.

Tech Equity Work Group

Focused on ensuring equitable access to and distribution of technology.

COVID-19 Continuity Task Force

Umbrella committee that will convene during the spring and summer of 2020 as needed to develop contingency planning for instructional and operational continuity in the event of continued COVID-19 related disruptions. Task Force and work groups will convene in May of 2020 and continue meeting through summer to prepare for 2020 - 2021 school year

Operations Work Group

Focused on food security, student safety, and transportation implications modifications related to COVID-19 disruptions.

Goal - Academic Achievement**Priority 2 - Accessing High-Performing Seats**

Objective - Develop a comprehensive strategy for COVID-19 disruptions, including the use of blended learning and the equitable distribution of technology, monitorable learning schedules, and robust family engagement.

Logistics Work Group

Focused on logistical and scheduling implications of COVID-19 disruptions, including with regard to the LHS construction project.

Career and Technical Education Expansion: New Pathways to Meet the Needs of All Students

Internal expansion:

Determining whether new chapter 74 certifications should be sought and for which programs at Lowell High School:

GLTHS Partnership:

Collaborating with GLTHS on possible expansion of opportunities for LHS students to participate in additional CTE programming opportunities.

Improving Transitions (SWDs)

Engaging students aged 18-22 preparations for post-secondary transitions through CTE programming to better develop life and career skills.

Goal - Operational Efficiency

Priority 3 - Aligning Secondary Programs w/ Opportunities

Objective:

LPS will identify potential expansion opportunities regarding ch. 74 certified CTE offerings through both an internal review of spatial capacity and student interest, and further engagement with Greater Lowell Technical High School.

Reimagining career and technical opportunities will provide students with expanded opportunities to develop practical and engaging skills that will better position them for post-secondary opportunities.

Building Culture + Mental Health Support + SEL Support = Less Discipline, Better Engagement, More Achievement

Renaissance Schools: SEL Supports

Investment in school climate specialist(s) and continued use of CASEL-based competencies.

Continued training in disciplinary practices grounded in restorative justice.

All Schools:

Identification through Quality Improvement Plans of strategies to ensure positive cultures and climates.

District-wide Collaboration

Expectation that school leaders identify best practices and tactics to ensure positive climates and sound disciplinary measures; opportunities to share practices across LPS.

High-Need Subgroups:

Identifying opportunities for inclusion is a proven tactic for building empathy and reducing disciplinary challenges.

Goal - Safe/Welcoming Culture

Priority 2 - Accessing High-Performing Seats

Objectives

School leaders will report on strategies being employed to enhance school culture and climate conditions within each school community and be given opportunities to share best practices with colleagues at school leader professional development programs in order to enhance district-wide effort toward eliminating burdensome disciplinary challenges and improve student outcomes..

Multifaceted effort across LPS to cultivate positive school climate, identify appropriate learning environments for all students, and shift disciplinary approach away from punitive measures and toward restorative practices.

Building stronger relationships w/ families

Through partners, extended outreach to families, LPS preK families, and LPS elementary school families, LPS will disseminate First 2000 Day manual and endeavor to build additional school and family partnerships through that connection.

Consult with EEC and ESE

LPS will confer with appropriate state agencies in order to include age appropriate metrics with regard to developmental milestones and other information from experts in the field

Developing a First 2000 Days Parent & Caregiver Support System

During the course of the 2020 - 2021 school year, LPS will collaborate with other early education and care providers in the Lowell community to develop a comprehensive set of resources that will be compiled and disseminated in an electronic and hard copy manual aimed at providing a centralized collection of information to assist parents of children ages 0 - 4 in the years leading up to Kindergarten.

Connecting with partners

LPS will identify and connect with early learning providers to gauge interest in their participation in First 2000 day manual

Goal - Family and Community Empowerment**Priority 2 - Accessing Early Learning**

Objective - LPS will collaborate with early learning providers to create First 2000 Day Parent & Caregiver Support System as a multiplatform collection of resources and best practices to support new parents. Roll out of system will occur by the conclusion of the 2020 -2021 school year.

Collaborating with partners

LPS will meet with all interested early learning providers to receive input on and collaborate for purposes of developing the First 2000 day manual.

Priority	Increasing access to early learning opportunities.	Increasing access to high-performing seats.	Aligning secondary programming with post-secondary opportunities.	Aligning secondary programming with post-secondary opportunities.
Preserved in one-year version of Strategic Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Spatial determinations - Increased coordination and support of providers based on EEC/ESE metrics - Stronger relationships with families - First 2000 Parent/Caregiver Support System 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strategies for blended learning - Role of SEL, mental health in instructional needs. - Definition of high quality - EL/SWD support strategies - Recommendation on assignment policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Plan for HS redesign - HS construction contingency plans - Portrait of a Graduate - Continued work under turnaround plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A) Chronic absenteeism B) Graduation/dropout rates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hiring and recruitment pipeline development - Cultural awareness and responsiveness training - Recognition of diversity & global community in curriculum and programming
Retained for consideration in years 2-5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expansion of internal seat capacity - Expanded forums and programming for prospective LPS families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Potential changes to assignment policies/procedures - Additional staffing and support structure for high-need students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implementation of HS redesign and further expansion of CTE programming and alternative education options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Additional programming and curricular strategies connected to diverse LPS community

Nexus of Strategic Plan and Eventual FY 21 Operating Budget

- *Maintaining investment in budget priorities as developed through Fair Student Funding formulas and site based budgeting will permit district staff and school leaders to pursue the objectives contained within this one-year (bridge) Strategic Plan, and importantly, lay the groundwork for the pursuit of the overarching goals and Strategic Priorities embedded within the long-term Strategic Plan.*

Goals

Improve **academic achievement** at every LPS school site.

Improve **operational efficiency** across LPS.

Ensure that every LPS school enjoys a **safe and welcoming culture**.

Increase LPS **community engagement and empower families** as partners

Priorities

Increasing access to early learning opportunities.

Increasing access to high-performing seats.

Aligning secondary programming with post-secondary opportunities.

Leveraging the rich diversity of the Lowell community to serve the interests of LPS students.

III) Actionable Objective and Measurable Outcomes:

1. Strategic Priority 1 - Early Learning Access (slide 21)
2. Strategic Priority 2 - High-Performing Seat Access (Slides 22-25)
3. Strategic Priority 3 - Aligning Programming w/ Post-Secondary Opportunities (slides 26-27)
4. Strategic Priority 4 - Leveraging Diversity (slides 28-29)



Increase access to and coordination of early learning opportunities for children from birth to age 5 by supporting the work of community partners to ensure that every child in Lowell is academically, emotionally, and socially prepared for Kindergarten. (Priority # 1)

Improve academic achievement at every LPS school site.	Improve operational efficiency across LPS.	Ensure that every LPS school enjoys a safe and welcoming culture .	Increase LPS community engagement and empower families as partners.
<p>LPS will work w/ EEC and ESE to develop professional development opportunities focusing on support for high-need learners; invite all providers</p> <p>LPS will collaborate with community partners to articulate performance metrics consistent with EEC/ESE guidance to share with community.</p> <p>LPS will engage in LPS staff working in Kindergarten and early grades to further strategize around how to serve learners without preK experience.</p>	<p>LPS will complete the work of the feasibility study contemplated by the January 2020 RFP and determine viable options for expansion of preK seats within LPS.</p> <p>LPS will engage all early learning providers to determine total spatial capacity within the Lowell community.</p> <p>LPS will develop estimated costs and timelines related to internal expansion.</p>	<p>LPS will provide traditional literature and electronic literature and contact information at city and community points of contact for new families.</p> <p>LPS will host periodic forums specifically targeting new parents to provide information related to early education and care.</p> <p>LPS will establish Prospective Family Council with parents of non-LPS students yet to enroll to confer with and help target future LPS families from different backgrounds.</p>	<p>LPS will collaborate with early learning providers to create catalogue of early and education and care options that clearly explains implications of each options, i.e. cost, nature of programming, schedule, calendar, etc.</p> <p>LPS will collaborate with early learning providers to create 2000 Parent & Caregiver Support System as a multiplatform collection of resources and best practices to support new parents. Roll out of system will occur by the conclusion of the 2020 -2021 school year.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - # of providers with whom LPS is actively engaged in a dialogue re metrics. - # of PD opportunities provided by LPS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Completion of feasibility study and assessment of external capacity throughout Lowell. - Presentation of estimated costs/timeline for expansion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased dissemination of info regarding early education and care. - # of community forms by LPS related to early education and care. - Establishment of Prospective Family Council. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creation and dissemination of catalogue of early learning provider options. - Creation and roll out of First 2000 Parent/Caregiver Support System. - System to evaluate efficacy of both.

Increase access for all students to high performing seats through the continuous improvement of all schools, the expansion of high demand programs, and an intensive focus on turning around historically underperforming schools. (Priority # 2)

Improve academic achievement at every LPS school site.	Improve operational efficiency across LPS.	Ensure that every LPS school enjoys a safe and welcoming culture .	Increase LPS community engagement and empower families as partners.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LPS will develop a comprehensive strategy for COVID-19 disruptions, including the use of blended learning and the equitable distribution of technology, monitorable learning schedules, and robust family engagement. - Steering Committee will engage in a dialogue over the definition of high-quality in conjunction with the Portrait of a Graduate initiative. Definition will include distinct roles of both SEL and mental health. - LPS will continue to deploy additional oversight and support to Renaissance Network in order to identify structural barriers and cultivate conditions conducive to continuous improvement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LPS will continue building out and employing inclusive school site councils for use in budget development consistent with respective school community needs and priorities. - LPS will identify budgetary capacity for and communicate publicly about timelines specific to each building community regarding 1:1 digital learning environments. - LPS will identify a technology utilization strategy and begin steps toward implementation, including device transitions and staff training. - School site councils will be asked to produce facility improvement reports to identify key infrastructure priorities for each school community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LPS will continue conducting school safety inspections. - School leaders will report on strategies being employed to enhance school culture and climate conditions within each school community and be given opportunities to share best practices with colleagues at school leader professional development programs in order to enhance district-wide effort toward eliminating burdensome disciplinary challenges. - All LPS staff will undergo year-long professional development focused on culturally and linguistically sustaining practices (cultural responsiveness). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LPS administration will engage in a community dialogue and convey to the Lowell School Committee recommendations concerning the current school assignment process.

Increase access for all students to high performing seats through the continuous improvement of all schools, the expansion of high demand programs, and an intensive focus on turning around historically underperforming schools. (Priority # 2)

Improve academic achievement at every LPS school site.	Improve operational efficiency across LPS.	Ensure that every LPS school enjoys a safe and welcoming culture .	Increase LPS community engagement and empower families as partners.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Production of blended learning plan in anticipation of potential future disruptions due to public health crisis. - Procurement and use of new data visualization system. - Portion of professional development programming focused on CASEL competencies and related integration. - Expansion of K-8 enrichment activities including arts and athletics programming opportunities in order to ensure district's programming is equitably allocated across school communities, with a particular focus on a determination of whether feed programming is equitably distributed across LPS for co-curricular programming at the high school level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participation and frequency of meeting data for school site councils. - Expansion of 1:1 digital learning environments in the context of blended learning and presentation of timeline forecasting achievement of 1:1 digital learning environments across LPS. - Presentation of technology utilization strategy including costs and timeline of full adoption and training (for staff). - Production of facility improvement reports identifying key infrastructure priorities for each school community on timeline consistent with Lowell's capital improvement cycle. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Data related to the completion of all school safety inspections. - Presentation of best practices identified within specific LPS school communities concerning school culture and climate and identification of next steps regarding replication elsewhere. - Completion by all staff of training on culturally and linguistically sustaining practices (cultural responsiveness). - Development of district-wide and school-based systems for monitoring mental health concerns for students in the the wake of COVID-19 public health crisis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Documented efforts at robust community engagement in order to demonstrate community awareness of the implications of potential changes to school assignment processes and presentation of recommendation(s) to the Lowell School Committee.

Increase access for all students to high performing seats through the continuous improvement of all schools, the expansion of high demand programs, and an intensive focus on turning around historically underperforming schools. (# 2 Cont.: Objectives specific to English Learners and Special Education)

Improve academic achievement at every LPS school site.	Improve operational efficiency across LPS.	Ensure that every LPS school enjoys a safe and welcoming culture .	Increase LPS community engagement and empower families as partners.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LPS will examine monthly disciplinary and attendance data to determine trends as they relate to disproportionality among high-need students. - LPS students preparing for transitions between the ages of 18-22 will be afforded more CTE programming opportunities and opportunities to participate in hands on learning within the Lowell community outside of traditional classroom settings. - LPS will examine and report to the school committee on trends with regard to ELD progression for students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LPS will examine on a quarterly basis what transportation systems are in place for students in alternative education settings and determine whether any additional accommodations are being requested and/or can/should be granted. - LPS will continue to monitor substantially separate learning environments, particularly in grades 7-12+ to ensure students for whom inclusion settings are more appropriate are afforded those opportunities. - LPS will examine opportunities to expand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LPS will continue to work with educators, families, and community partners to ensure that inclusive settings are providing comprehensive support to students both academically and socially. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LPS will gauge interest of families and educators in the possible reinstitution of dual language programming based on organizational capacity and family interest. - LPS will continue to engage through the English Learner Parent Advisory Council to determine more ways to engage families of ELs in full school and family partnerships.

Increase access for all students to high performing seats through the continuous improvement of all schools, the expansion of high demand programs, and an intensive focus on turning around historically underperforming schools. (# 2 Cont.: Objectives specific high-need learners, including EL and SWDs)

Improve academic achievement at every LPS school site.	Improve operational efficiency across LPS.	Ensure that every LPS school enjoys a safe and welcoming culture .	Increase LPS community engagement and empower families as partners.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduction in disproportionality in both disciplinary infraction data and chronic absenteeism for both students with disabilities and English Learners, particularly at Lowell High School. - Participation in 18-22 year old LPS students in employment opportunities that reaches 50%. - Participation by 18-22 year old LPS students in CTE programming. - Presentation to Lowell School Committee on trends as they related to ELD progression for English Learners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Periodic reporting on initiatives related to transportation for students whose educational needs require them to be offsite. - Presentation of trends and plans as they relate to the ratio of students in substantially separate environments as compared to inclusion settings in grades 7 – 12. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Documented engagement with Special Education Parent Advisory Council and English Learner Parent Advisory Council on the social and emotional learning supports being provided to high-need learners with particular attention focused on any challenges students and families are experiencing with regard to social immersion in inclusion settings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Documented engagement in discussions with educators and families about possible implementation of dual language programming with presentation to the Lowell School Committee on potential pros and cons of that choice. - Documented additional methods and tactics of engaging English Learner families and evidence of more robust school and family partnerships.

Align secondary school curriculum and programs for all students with post-secondary opportunities so that they are college, career, and life ready upon graduation. (Priority # 3)

Improve academic achievement at every LPS school site.	Improve operational efficiency across LPS.	Ensure that every LPS school enjoys a safe and welcoming culture .	Increase LPS community engagement and empower families as partners.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LPS will engage a comprehensive redesign strategy centered MassCore and three avenues: A) University-level rigor (early college) B) Alternative Education Options (non-trad. environments) C) Career and Technical Education (CTE) - LPS will incorporate into redesign staffing and support systems recognizing many students not perfectly suited at present for those three avenues as constituted. - LPS will deepen opportunities for intra-district collaboration focused on both vertical and horizontal alignment, including among alternative ed.options. - During redesign process, LPS will consider tactics for rapid reversal of declining graduation/dropout data. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LPS develop and communicate to community detailed contingency planning for each phase of high school construction project, particularly in the context of COVID-19 responsiveness and readiness strategies. - LPS will identify potential expansion opportunities regarding ch. 74 certified CTE offerings through both an internal review of spatial capacity and student interest and further engagement with Greater Lowell Technical High School, particularly with respect to any opportunities yielded by the HS construction project. - LPS will message and promote the concept of LHS as both the LPS flagship and the epicenter of the Lowell educational community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LPS will review options with regard to expanded Alternative Education Options programming and communicate about expansion to prospective LHS students and families. - LPS will continue to expand opportunities for peer to peer interaction between LHS students and LPS students through co-curricular programming in order to build positive associations with LHS community and develop greater engagement with prospective LHS students. - LPS will improve coordination of and support for existing LHS partners, including Gear UP, JAG, MassHire, MCC, PALs, and several others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LPS will continue to expand partnership opportunities with higher education institutions in the Lowell community for potential career pathways. - LPS though Steering Committee will engage in a community-wide effort to define "student success" in Portrait of a Graduate initiative that is based on relevant, 21st century skill sets and capacities. - LPS will deepen engage in robust family engagement, particularly through Special Education Advisory Council, to try to reverse troubling data regarding chronic absenteeism.

Align secondary school curriculum and programs for all students with post-secondary opportunities so that they are college, career, and life ready upon graduation. (Priority # 3)

Improve academic achievement at every LPS school site.	Improve operational efficiency across LPS.	Ensure that every LPS school enjoys a safe and welcoming culture .	Increase LPS community engagement and empower families as partners.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Produce timeline and associated costs for comprehensive high school redesign that includes adoption of MassCore, expansion of Advanced Placement and Dual Enrollment opportunities, expansion of alternative educational options portfolio, and expansion of career and technical educational programming opportunities. - Document strategies for ensuring that LHS students continue to have appropriate levels of choice both during and after high school redesign process. - Documented structured time for intra-district collaboration among elementary school, middle school and secondary educators. - Present tactics for rapid reversal of dropout and graduation data. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Present detailed contingency planning for each phase of high school construction project with regard to logistical and educational challenges posed by project, especially with regard to COVID-19 strategies. - Present a detailed report on the district's CTE expansion and growth priorities with regard to both internal LPS expansion and through partnerships with GLTHS. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Documented efforts to expand dialogue with families of both LHS students and prospective LHS students with regard to educational needs of students who may explore potentially expanded portfolio of alternative educational options. - Documented expansion of peer to peer interaction between LHS students and LPS middle/elementary school students through mentoring programs or other opportunities to inform prospective LHS students about the programming opportunities within LHS. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Documented exploration of partnership expansions with higher education to realize opportunities for career paths including educator pipelines. - Completion of community-driven process to define "student success" through Portrait of a Graduate initiative that includes relevant, 21st century skill sets and capacities. - Documented family engagement efforts through Special Education Advisory Council, to try to reverse troubling data regarding chronic absenteeism.

Leverage the rich diversity that defines the Lowell community through a fundamental commitment to equity so that all students access the full benefits of growing up in a truly global community. (Priority # 4)

Improve academic achievement at every LPS school site.	Improve operational efficiency across LPS.	Ensure that every LPS school enjoys a safe and welcoming culture .	Increase LPS community engagement and empower families as partners.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LPS will intentionally commit to celebrating and affirming Lowell's racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity through culturally relevant and sustaining curricular and programmatic choices across all grade levels. - LPS will work to ensure that engagement with families is effective and consistent with the needs of the population that LPS is serving through retention of appropriate staffing support with respect to translation services and family liaison support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LPS will work to ensure budgetary decisions are consistent with needs of each school community's diverse population of students and families through site-based budgeting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LPS will renew its focus on recruitment and the cultivation of diversity through a multifaceted strategy to deepen its pool of prospective employees. - LPS employees will participate in cultural awareness and responsiveness training tailored to each component of the organization, including an emphasis on customer service for entities responsible for making initial contact with prospective LPS families. - LPS will improve communications with families and community partners to establish sturdier and more sustainable relationships with both. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LPS will continue utilization of school site councils in order to cultivate methods of shared decision-making and collaboration with parent communities. - LPS will continue collaboration with the Superintendent's Steering Committee to ensure diverse community stakeholders are engaged and providing feedback on district decisions.

Leverage the rich diversity that defines the Lowell community through a fundamental commitment to equity so that all students access the full benefits of growing up in a truly global community. (Priority # 4)

Improve academic achievement at every LPS school site.	Improve operational efficiency across LPS.	Ensure that every LPS school enjoys a safe and welcoming culture .	Increase LPS community engagement and empower families as partners.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Present exemplars of curriculum artifacts consistent with renewed effort toward celebrating Lowell's racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity. - Documentation of staffing structures consistent with the evolving demographics of students and families being served by LPS. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Documentation of staffing and programmatic decisions rendered by school communities consistent with the needs of their diverse population. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Documentation of efforts to and efficacy of tactics employed to deepen prospective employee pipelines. - Percentage of LPS employees participating in cultural awareness and responsiveness training and documentation as how training was tailored consistent with the responsibilities of groups of employees.. - Documented expansion of communication methods employed and qualitative data regarding responsiveness by families to determine improvement in relationship capacity building. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participation and frequency of meeting data for school site councils. - Participation and frequency of meeting data for Superintendent's Steering Committee.



IV) Next Steps and Progress Monitoring:

1. Next Steps and Progress Monitoring (slide 31)





Strategic Planning Initiative: Developing the Five-Year Plan for the Lowell Public Schools

Next Steps
(immediate)

&

Progress monitoring
(SY 2020 - 2021)

Next Steps:

- Presentation of Strategic Plan and Proposed Budgetary on May 6, 2020 to the Lowell School Committee
- Production of companion literature and electronic platforms to communicate overarching goals and Strategic Priorities.

Progress monitoring:

- Quarterly updates to the Lowell School Committee detailing actions taken in the context of the measurable outcomes presented herein.

Updates tied to academic cycle:

- Summer **planning** for impending school year
- Convocation - **school opening**, articulation of year's goals.
- State of the Schools: **Mid-year update** to community on progress/challenges
- Year-end **annual report**



V) Appendix: Organizational Areas of Responsibility

1. Areas of Responsibility per LPS Office and Department
(slides 33-43)
2. Strategic Plan Generation I Presented to the Policy Subcommittee on April 23, 2020 (slides 44-63)



Office of the Superintendent

Office of Teaching and Learning

Schools, Data/Performance Management; Professional Development

Special Education; English Learners; Curriculum; Technology; SEL; Alt Ed; Early Childhood; Athletics;

Office of Educational Equity and Community Empowerment

Family Resource Center; Communications; Translations/Interpretation; Equity and Culturally Sustaining Practices

Office of Finance and Operations

Human Resources; Facilities; Food Service; Safety/Security;

Transportation; Budget; Procurement; Payroll; Grants; Asset Management

Goals

Improve **academic achievement** at every LPS school site.

Ensure that every LPS school enjoys a **safe and welcoming culture**.

Improve **operational efficiency** across LPS.

Increase LPS **community engagement and empower families** as partners

Priorities

Increasing access to early learning opportunities.

Increasing access to high-performing seats.

Aligning secondary programming with post-secondary opportunities.

Leveraging the rich diversity of the Lowell community to serve the interests of LPS students.

Office of Teaching and Learning

Schools, Data/Performance Management; Professional Development

Special Education; English Learners; Curriculum; Technology; SEL; Alt Ed; Early Childhood; Athletics

Work Stream/Initiative	Personnel responsible	Data point/output
<p>Work w/ EEC and ESE to develop professional development opportunities focusing on support for high-need learners; invite all providers.</p> <p>Collaborate with community partners to articulate performance metrics consistent with EEC/ESE guidance to share with community.</p>	Early Childhood, Professional Development	Increased participation in and effectiveness of partnerships
<p>Provide traditional literature and electronic literature and contact information at city and community points of contact for new families.</p> <p>Host periodic forums specifically targeting new parents to provide information related to early education and care.</p>	Early Childhood**	Volume of dissemination, frequency and effectiveness of forums
<p>Collaborate with early learning providers to create catalogue of early education and care options that clearly explains implications of options, i.e. cost, nature of programming, schedule, calendar, etc.</p> <p>Collaborate with early learning providers to create First 2000 Day Parent & Caregiver Support System as a multiplatform collection of resources and best practices to support new parents. Roll out of system will occur by the conclusion of the 2020 -2021 school year.</p>	Early Childhood**	Production of catalogue and First 2000 Day Parent & Caregiver Support System; use thereof

Office of Teaching and Learning (cont.)

Schools, Data/Performance Management; Professional Development

Special Education; English Learners; Curriculum; Technology; SEL; Alt Ed; Early Childhood; Athletics

Work Stream/Initiative	Personnel responsible	Data point/output
<p>Develop a comprehensive strategy for the use of blended learning that includes equitable distribution of technology, monitorable learning schedules, and robust family engagement.</p> <p>Engage through Steering Committee in dialogue over the definition of high-quality in conjunction with the Portrait of a Graduate initiative. Definition will include roles of both SEL and mental health.</p>	ALL **	Production of equitable blended learning strategy and comprehensive definition of high-quality
Continue to deploy additional oversight and support to Renaissance Network in order to identify structural barriers and cultivate conditions conducive to continuous improvement.	Schools; SEL; Special Ed, EL; Data; PD	Elimination of disproportionately and achievement gaps
Identify budgetary capacity for and communicate publicly about timelines specific to each building community regarding 1:1 digital learning environments.	Technology	1:1 environment, clear communication realization thereof
<p>Report on strategies being employed to enhance school culture and climate conditions within each school community and school leaders share best practices with colleagues at school leader professional development programs to eliminate burdensome disciplinary challenges.</p> <p>Undergo year-long professional development focused on culturally and linguistically sustaining practices (cultural responsiveness).</p>	SEL, Special Ed, English Learners, Data; Schools; PD	Enhanced school cultures and sharing of best practices across schools

Office of Teaching and Learning (cont.)

Schools, Data/Performance Management; Professional Development

Special Education; English Learners; Curriculum; Technology; SEL; Alt Ed; Early Childhood; Athletics

Work Stream/Initiative	Personnel responsible	Data point/output
LPS will examine monthly disciplinary and attendance data to determine trends as they relate to disproportionality among high-need students.	Schools; Data; Special Ed; English Learners	Reduction in disproportionately
Prepare students for transitions between the ages of 18-22 through CTE programming opportunities and opportunities to participate in hands on learning within the Lowell community outside of traditional classroom settings. Examine and report to the school committee on trends regarding ELD progression.	Special Ed, Schools, English Learners; Data.	Increase in participation and exposure to transition opportunities; strategies regarding ELD growth
Monitor substantially separate learning environments, particularly in grades 7-12+ to ensure students for whom inclusion settings are more appropriate are afforded those opportunities.	Special Ed; Schools	Increase in inclusion
Continue to work with educators, families, and community partners to ensure that inclusive settings are providing comprehensive support to students both academically and socially.	Special Ed; SEL**	Improved quality of inclusion settings.
Gauge interest of families and educators in the possible reinstitution of dual language programming based on organizational capacity and family interest. Continue to engage through the English Learner Parent Advisory Council to determine more ways to engage families of ELs in full school and family partnerships	English Learners; Curriculum; Schools**	Formation of recommendations; improved family relations.

Office of Teaching and Learning (cont.)

Schools, Data/Performance Management; Professional Development

Special Education; English Learners; Curriculum; Technology; SEL; Alt Ed; Early Childhood; Athletics

Work Stream/Initiative	Personnel responsible	Data point/output
Engage in a comprehensive redesign strategy centered MassCore and three avenues: A) University-level rigor, B) Alternative Education Options non-trad. environments), C) Career and Technical Education (CTE), recognizing need to support students not perfectly suited at present for those three avenues.	All	Proposal for comprehensive high school redesign
Provide opportunities for intra-district collaboration focused on vertical and horizontal alignment to better prepare students for transition to 9 th grade. Consider additional tactics for rapid reversal of declining graduation/dropout data.	All	Strategies to reverse declining graduation/dropout data; evidence of vertical alignment
Identify potential expansion opportunities regarding ch. 74 certified CTE offerings through both an internal review of spatial capacity in light of HS construction project, and student interest, and further engage with Greater Lowell Technical High School to explore options.	Schools	Additional CTE offerings
Provide opportunities for peer to peer interaction between LHS students and LPS elementary/middle school students through co-curricular programming in order to build positive associations with LHS.	Schools; Curriculum	Increased interest in LHS by LPS students
Expand partnership opportunities with higher education institutions in the Lowell community for potential career pathways.	Schools**	Expanded partnerships

Office of Teaching and Learning (cont.)

Schools, Data/Performance Management; Professional Development

Special Education; English Learners; Curriculum; Technology; SEL; Alt Ed; Early Childhood; Athletics

Work Stream/Initiative	Personnel responsible	Data point/output
Commit to celebrating and affirming Lowell's racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity through culturally relevant and sustaining curricular/programmatic choices across all grade levels.	Schools; Curriculum;	Increased CLSP programming
Engage in robust family engagement, particularly through Special Education Advisory Council, to try to reverse troubling data regarding chronic absenteeism.	English Learners	Stronger family partnerships and input into EL programming
Examine monthly disciplinary and attendance data to determine trends as they relate to disproportionality among high-need students.	Schools; English Learners; Special Ed	Elimination of disproportionately and gaps regarding discipline and attendance

Office of Finance and Operations

Human Resources; Facilities; Food Service; Safety/Security;

Transportation; Budget; Procurement; Payroll; Grants; Asset Management

Work Stream/Initiative	Personnel responsible	Data point/output
Complete work of feasibility study contemplated by the January 2020 RFP and determine viable options for expansion of preK seats within LPS and within community partners.	Facilities; Asset Management	Estimates with regard to space and costs
LPS will continue building out and employing inclusive school site councils for use in budget development consistent with respective school community needs and priorities.	Budget	Support to school in developing budgets
Identify a technology utilization strategy and begin steps toward implementation, including device transitions and staff training.	Facilities; Budget; Procurement	Development of strategy
School site councils will be asked to produce facility improvement reports identify key infrastructure priorities for each school community.	Facilities	Process for receiving and reviewing SSC reports on infrastructure priorities
Continue conducting school safety inspections.	Safety/Security	Annual and periodic safety reviews

Office of Finance and Operations (cont.)

Human Resources; Facilities; Food Service; Safety/Security;

Transportation; Budget; Procurement; Payroll; Grants; Asset Management

Work Stream/Initiative	Personnel responsible	Data point/output
Examine on a quarterly basis what transportation systems are in place for students in alternative education settings and determine whether any additional accommodations are being requested and/or can/should be granted.	Transportation	Quarterly reports ensuring ongoing dialogue with Special Education/Alt Ed
Develop and communicate to community detailed contingency planning for each phase of high school construction project particularly with regard to COVID-19 responsiveness and readiness strategies.	Facilities	Report on contingency planning during HS project
Work to ensure budgetary decisions are consistent with needs of each school community's diverse population of students and families through site-based budgeting.	Budget	Well-informed school budget proposals
Renew its focus on recruitment and the cultivation of diversity through a multifaceted strategy to deepen its pool of prospective employees.	Human Resources	Deeper and more diverse applicant pool

Office of Educational Equity and Community Empowerment

Family Resource Center; Communications;
Translations/Interpretation; Equity and Culturally Sustaining Practices

Work Stream/Initiative	Personnel responsible	Data point/output
<p>Provide information through various mediums and platforms with contact information at city and community points of contact for new families.</p> <p>Host periodic forums specifically targeting new parents to provide information related to early education and care.</p>	Communications; ECSP**	Volume of dissemination, frequency and effectiveness of forums
Establish Prospective Family Council with parents of non-LPS students yet to enroll to confer with and help target future LPS families from different backgrounds.	ECSP**	New and stronger family partnerships
<p>Collaborate with early learning providers to create catalogue of early and education and care options that clearly explains implications of each options, i.e. cost, nature of programming, schedule, calendar, etc.</p> <p>Collaborate with early learning providers to create 2000 Parent & Caregiver Support System as a multiplatform collection of resources and best practices to support new parents. Roll out of system will occur by the conclusion of the 2020 -2021 school year.</p>	Communications; ECSP**	Production of catalogue and 2000 Day Parent & Caregiver Support System; use thereof
Steering Committee will engage in a dialogue over the definition of high-quality in conjunction with the Portrait of a Graduate initiative. Definition will include roles of both SEL and mental health.	ECSP**	Production of equitable blended learning strategy and comprehensive definition of high-quality

Office of Educational Equity and Community Empowerment (cont.)

Family Resource Center; Communications;
Translations/Interpretation; Equity and Culturally Sustaining Practices

Work Stream/Initiative	Personnel responsible	Data point/output
Engage in a community dialogue and convey to the school committee recommendations concerning the current school assignment process.	ECSP	Recommendation to the Lowell School Committee
Gauge interest of families and educators in the possible reinstitution of dual language programming based on organizational capacity and family interest. Continue to engage through the English Learner Parent Advisory Council to determine more ways to engage families of ELs in full school and family partnerships.	ECSP**	Formation of recommendations; improved family relations.
Expand partnership opportunities with higher education institutions in the Lowell community for potential career pathways. Through Steering Committee engage in a community-wide effort to define “student success” in Portrait of a Graduate initiative that is based on relevant, 21st century skill sets and capacities.	ECSP	Expanded partnerships and consensus-based definition of “student success.”
Ensure that engagement with families is effective and consistent with the needs of the population that LPS is serving through retention of appropriate staffing support with respect to translation services and family liaison support.	Translations/ Interpretation	Effective modes and methods of communication; stronger family partnerships

Office of Educational Equity and Community Empowerment (cont.)

Family Resource Center; Communications;
Translations/Interpretation; Equity and Culturally Sustaining Practices

Work Stream/Initiative	Personnel responsible	Data point/output
Ensure all LPS employees will participate in cultural awareness and responsiveness training tailored to each component of the organization, including an emphasis on customer service for entities responsible for making initial contact with prospective LPS families. Improve communications with families and community partners to establish sturdier and more sustainable relationships with both.	ECSP	District-wide training completion and targeted training/supports for entities interacting with families
Continue utilization of school site councils in order to cultivate methods of shared decision-making and collaboration with parent communities. Continue collaboration with the Superintendent's Steering Committee to ensure diverse community stakeholders are engaged and providing feedback on district decisions.	ECSP	Reaffirmed commitment to diverse voices and perspective through standing structures at district and building levels, respectively

Lowell Public Schools

Strategic Planning Draft Update

April 23, 2020

Building a Five-Year Plan





Strategic Planning Initiative: Developing the Five-Year Plan for the Lowell Public Schools

COVID-19 Public Health Crisis

March 13, 2020

- Abrupt change to how LPS operates with unknown implications for subsequent school years.
- **Operational efforts** ongoing to support students with regard to nutrition and technology needs.

Food & Nutrition

- **Total of 129,777 meals served:**
 - Week 1 : March 16th: 7,393*
 - Week 2: March 23rd: 16,724*
 - Week 3: March 30th: 23,244
 - Week 4: April 6th: 39,334
 - Wk5: April 13th: 43,082**

* No breakfast served in first two weeks.

**Weekend means began week of 4/13

Technology Delivery

- 3,020 Chromebooks distributed.*
- 21% of LPS families indicated they were in need of devices.
- Second round distribution is underway now. Data now being collected with regard to technology related requests and district responsiveness.

*Work to determine how to expand WiFi access is currently ongoing.



Strategic Planning Initiative: Developing the Five-Year Plan for the Lowell Public Schools

COVID-19 Public Health Crisis

March 13, 2020

- Abrupt change to how LPS operates with unknown implications for subsequent school year.
- **Instructional and engagement efforts** ongoing to support students with continuity of instruction and family support.

Remote Learning Activities

65% of students participating in remote learning on a daily basis with participation ranging from 50% to 80% in different schools. Goal is 100%.

Ongoing efforts to increase daily participation in remote learning:

- Continuous outreach; focusing on students not yet reached.
- Ongoing device distribution (round 2).
- Use of multiple communication platforms and door to door where possible.
- Use of daily announcements and media.
- Data collection on students needing additional supports and following up as needed.
- Weekly CPTs in each building to support teacher efforts.

Student & Family Outreach

- 99% of students with whom schools have made contact are in regular and continued contact.
- Currently 8 schools have connected with 100% of students.

Documentation methods by schools with students and families ranges:

- Google sheet logs
- Class Dojo
- Zoom meeting logs
- Google Classroom.



Strategic Planning Initiative: Developing the Five-Year Plan for the Lowell Public Schools

Recommended Shift in Strategic Planning timeline:

- The proposed Strategic Priorities and related work streams have been developed **in contemplation of a five-year timeline.**
- Given budgetary and operational uncertainties due to the public health crisis, we are preparing **a one-year version of the Strategic Plan** to guide district through 2020 – 2021.





Lowell Public Schools - Developing Strategic Plan

Process and Sequence Check: How we arrived at these four proposed Strategic Priorities

- 1. Spring 2019: Superintendent Hiring Process:**
Mandate to develop strategies to close opportunity gaps and cultivate more equitable learning environment for all students.
- 2. July - January 2019: Superintendent's Listening Tour:**
Accumulation of information on district's strengths, challenges, and opportunities through hundreds of stakeholder meetings, including nearly 60 listening sessions with staff, over 40 gatherings with external partners and community representatives, and 100 school visits in the first 100 school days.
- 3. October - December 2019: Strategic Planning Goal and Priority Setting:**
Development of Core Beliefs, Fundamental Commitments and the broad goals and specific priorities thought necessary to bring about sustainable improvements to LPS based on achievement data and trajectories.
- 4. January - March 2020: School Community Visits:**
Discussed developing priority and goal areas in dozens of meetings across over 20 LPS schools to hear from frontline educators.



Strategic Planning Initiative: Overarching Goal Areas

Improve academic achievement at every LPS school site.	Improve operational efficiency across LPS.
Ensure that every LPS school enjoys a safe and welcoming culture .	Increase LPS community engagement and empower families as partners

Question: What needs to be prioritized in order to move these goals forward?

Answer: Strategic Priorities 1-4



Lowell Public Schools - Developing Strategic Plan

Conclusions that have shaped the proposed Strategic Priorities:

1. Throughout the Lowell Public Schools, students are experiencing meaningful, innovative, and engaging learning experiences.
2. The diversity and commitment to equity within the Lowell community is an enormous advantage on which LPS must capitalize to ensure continued progress.
3. LPS must strive to eliminate achievement gaps arising from systemic barriers to the excellent educational opportunities available throughout LPS.
4. LPS's educational programming must be fully aligned with and relevant to the rapidly evolving and increasingly competitive world in which its graduates will ultimately reside.





Lowell Public Schools - Developing Strategic Plan

Strategic Priorities: Core Component of the LPS 5-Year Strategic Plan

What are the Strategic Priorities?

The Strategic Priorities are the four core work streams at the heart of the district's proposed strategic plan that will be submitted to the Lowell School Committee.

Why are these four priorities being proposed as the core of the Strategic Plan?

They reflect information about the district's most pressing needs as determined by the charge to the superintendent upon his appointment and feedback both from the superintendent's entry listening tour and dozens of school community forums convened between January and March.

How will the COVID-19 public health crisis affect this work?

The importance of the underlying prioritization of improving equitable access to the excellent opportunities present in LPS is magnified by the current crisis, but the timelines and sequences connected to the associated workstreams will require flexibility and pragmatism as the district continues to navigate the worldwide implications of COVID-19. Consequently a one-year version of the plan is being developed now.





Strategic Planning Initiative: Developing the Five-Year Plan for the Lowell Public Schools

Overarching Goals and Four Strategic Priorities:

Improve
**academic
achievement** at
every LPS
school site.

Improve
**operational
efficiency**
across LPS.

Ensure that
every LPS
school enjoys a
**safe and
welcoming
culture.**

Increase LPS
**community
engagement
and empower
families** as
partners

Strategic Priority # 1:

Increase access to and coordination of early learning opportunities for children from birth to age 5 by supporting the work of community partners to ensure that every child in Lowell is academically, emotionally, and socially prepared for Kindergarten.

Strategic Priority # 2:

Increase access for all students to high performing seats through the continuous improvement of all schools, the expansion of high demand programs, and an intensive focus on turning around historically underperforming schools.

Strategic Priority # 3:

Align secondary school curriculum and programs for all students with post-secondary opportunities so that they are college, career, and life ready upon graduation.

Strategic Priority # 4:

Leverage the rich diversity that defines the Lowell community through a fundamental commitment to equity so that all students access the full benefits of growing up in a truly global community.



Strategic Priority # 1: Increase access to and coordination of early learning opportunities for children from birth to age 5 by supporting the work of community partners to ensure that every child in Lowell is academically, emotionally, and socially prepared for Kindergarten.

Why: The most effective way to eliminate gaps in achievement is to prevent them from occurring. Opportunity gaps in early grades (which create compounding challenges in later grades) are apparent from the moment students enter LPS. More equitable access to educational services prior to age 5 will reduce this inequity.

Current Strength: LPS and Lowell community enjoy a robust collection of early education partners devoted to early education and care with invaluable expertise in the area of early education and care.

Action Steps:

1. Determine LPS's internal capacity for additional early education services, and support early education community partners in determining and potentially expanding their own capacity.
2. Explore EEC and ESE metrics to help support community partners in use of best practices through greater coordination of services.
3. Improve communication methods to more effectively connect with early education partners and families seeking care.
4. Collaborate with community partners to Produce 2000 Day manual.



Nexus of District Goals and Strategic Priority 1: Early Education Access

Improve academic achievement at every LPS school site.	Improve operational efficiency across LPS.	Ensure that every LPS school enjoys a safe and welcoming culture .	Increase LPS community engagement and empower families as partners.
<p>Expand access to and support community providers of preK services in order to prevent formation of opportunity gaps in later years.</p> <p>Collaborate with community partners to articulate performance metrics consistent with EEC guidance.</p>	<p>Determine sustainable LPS preK capacity and support coordination and determination of capacity among community partners</p>	<p>Improve outreach and communication efforts to connect with more families and provide accurate information re preK opportunities.</p>	<p>Support and coordinate efforts by community partners and Early Childhood Council to cultivate preK opportunities for all Lowell families.</p> <p>Leverage collective expertise of community partners and internal staff to develop 2000 Day manual for Lowell families.</p>



Strategic Priority # 2: Increase access for all students to high performing seats through the continuous improvement of all schools, the expansion of high demand programs, and an intensive focus on turning around historically underperforming schools.

Why: Systemic challenges have produced inequitable access for high-need students to high-quality programming and is exacerbated by the COVID-19 public health crisis.

Current Strength: Large pockets of excellence exist across LPS, which is evident from the vibrant culture of pride that is evident within virtually all LPS school communities.

Action Steps:

1. Incorporate more blended learning strategies into academic programming in response to the COVID-19 crisis and closure.
2. Examine choice assignment policies and practice with recommendations to the Lowell School Committee during the 2020 – 2021 school year.
3. Develop consensus definition for high-quality in order to identify best ways to expand access to those opportunities that clearly exist throughout LPS. **
4. Target support and oversight around Renaissance Network of schools.
5. Plan timeline for investments necessary to achieve 1:1 digital learning environment.
6. Organize and deploy supports to English Learner population.
7. Develop facility improvement planning process for each school to complete on an annual basis to determine infrastructure, maintenance, and technology priorities.





Strategic Priority # 2: Increase access for all students to high performing seats through the continuous improvement of all schools, the expansion of high demand programs, and an intensive focus on turning around historically underperforming schools. **(Cont.)**

Developing a **consensus definition of high-quality leading to more equitable access

Breaking apart that process:

1. Procure and implement **comprehensive data visualization** system to change data is collected, utilized, and presented.
2. Organize professional development and supports in recognition of the unique role that **social and emotional needs play in students' hierarchy of learning needs** to reduce troubling trends in student conduct and behavior.
3. Target investments and staffing support **to cultivate school cultures and climates more conducive to students' needs** and provide educators greater support with regard to student discipline.
4. Explore the **expansion of K-8 enrichment activities**, including arts and athletics in order to provide for more compelling and hospitable environments.
5. Concentrate **budgetary decision-making within school communities** so decisions are made by those closest to students and familiar with their needs.



Nexus of District Goals and Strategic Priority 2: High-Performing Seat Access

Improve **academic achievement** at every LPS school site.

Develop a **comprehensive definition of high-quality** programming that includes measurable data, social and emotional foundational support, accessibility to reliable instructional technology, and equitable enrichment programming.

Improve **operational efficiency** across LPS.

Identify equitable **blended learning strategies** in response to potential need to operate remotely.

Complete **yearly facility improvement plans** for each building to understand comprehensive infrastructure priority list for each school community including climate control challenges, plumbing issues, electrical capacity, technology needs, and any potential safety improvement.

Implement site-based budgeting practices to ensure **informed decision-making with regard to staffing** and support structures.

Ensure that every LPS school enjoys a **safe and welcoming culture**.

Support school communities in the development of **equitable disciplinary practices** and cultivation of constructive school climates.

Identify and invest in supports necessary to **support the district's EL population, students with disabilities, and other high-need subgroups** through targeted strategies that include more robust family engagement and SEL supports.

Increase LPS **community engagement and empower families** as partners.

Examine **school assignment practices** and policies in order to develop recommendations to the Lowell School Committee.



Strategic Priority # 3: Align secondary school curriculum and programs for all students with post-secondary opportunities so that they are college, career, and life ready upon graduation.

Why: To prepare students for success in an increasingly competitive world, LPS must reverse concerning graduation, dropout, and chronic absenteeism and implement a secondary education program that provides students with engaging, rigorous, and meaningful opportunities.

Current Strength: The size, diversity, and external partnerships that characterize Lowell's flagship school affords LPS inherent advantages in the development of multifaceted opportunities for students across various pathways.

Action Steps:

1. Implement comprehensive high school redesign program built on three distinct overarching pathways to serve as focal points of students' secondary careers.**
2. Based on disproportionality among subgroups, target supports for more supportive environments to reduce concerning graduation, dropout, and attendance data.
3. Execute inclusive, community-wide effort under Portrait of a Graduate initiative to define "student success" consistent with student' post-secondary needs.
4. Continue to execute strategies, including those around staff culture under LHS turnaround plan.





Strategic Priority # 3: Align secondary school curriculum and programs for all students with post-secondary opportunities so that they are college, career, and life ready upon graduation. **(Cont.)**

Implement a comprehensive **high school redesign program with **rigor** reflective of the challenges students will encounter as graduates and that is **relevant** to the skills that post-secondary opportunities will demand. The foundation of that redesign process will be grounded in the cultivation of meaningful **relationships** between students and the educators who will guide them through three interest-based pathways:

1. Expansion of **rigorous college level** programming:
 - A) Early college/dual enrollment programming with Middlesex Community College.
 - B) Advanced Placement program at Lowell High School
2. Develop additional **alternative educational options** for students requiring more non- traditional learning environments, expanding upon the success of programs like the Career Academy.
3. Explore expansion of in-house **career and technical education (CTE) programs** and expansion of partnership with Greater Lowell Technical High School to afford students greater access to ch. 74 certified pathway programming opportunities.



Nexus of District Goals and Strategic Priority 3: Secondary Programming Alignment

Improve academic achievement at every LPS school site.	Improve operational efficiency across LPS.	Ensure that every LPS school enjoys a safe and welcoming culture .	Increase LPS community engagement and empower families as partners.
<p>Implement high school redesign strategy based on three interest-based pathways:</p> <p>A) College level rigor (AP/EC),</p> <p>B) Portfolio of alternative educational options (non-traditional space),</p> <p>C) Career and technical education programming (CTE) to provide more intentional pathways for students and reverse declining graduation, dropout, and attendance data.</p>	<p>Seek additional Chapter 74 certifications for Lowell High School programs.</p> <p>Build stronger reciprocal partnership with GLTHS to expand CTE offerings to more LHS students.</p>	<p>Identify additional school culture opportunities to be realized with the completion of the LHS construction project.</p>	<p>Expand existing and explore new partnership opportunities with higher education institutions in the Lowell community for potential career pathways and educator pipelines.</p> <p>Engage in a community-wide effort to define “student success” in 2020 through Portrait of a Graduate initiative that includes relevant, 21st century skill sets and capacities.</p>



Strategic Priority # 4: Leverage the rich diversity that defines the Lowell community through a fundamental commitment to equity so that all students access the full benefits of growing up in a truly global community.

Why: Celebrating Lowell's racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity provides students with insight into the globalized society in which they will reside, creating a more hospitable environment that is conducive to more robust school and family partnerships.

Current Strength: Lowell's racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity are a defining character of the community and provides the opportunity for cultural awareness and provides students with the chance for a deeper understanding of the value of diversity.

Action Steps:

1. Development additional and more diverse hiring pipelines through expanded recruitment and diversity cultivation efforts.
2. Implementation of cultural responsiveness training across all school communities in recognition of the unique needs of the LPS student population.
3. Focus on the invaluable benefits of learning within globalized community through events, curriculum choices, and family engagement.
4. Improved and expanded communication strategies to be sure that LPS is connecting with all students' families.
5. Further establish and rely on school site councils to engage all stakeholders.



Nexus of District Goals and Strategic Priority 4: Leveraging Diversity

Improve academic achievement at every LPS school site.	Improve operational efficiency across LPS.	Ensure that every LPS school enjoys a safe and welcoming culture .	Increase LPS community engagement and empower families as partners.
Explore opportunities to celebrate and affirm Lowell's racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity through cultural relevant and sustaining curricular and programmatic choices .	<p>Ensure budgetary decisions are consistent with needs of each school community's diverse population of students and families through site-based budgeting.</p> <p>Implement a renewed focus on recruitment and the cultivation of diversity in order to deepen the pool of LPS prospective employees.</p>	Improve district and school-based communications with families and community partnerships through revamped communication methods and adoption of universal translation services system .	<p>Continue utilization of school site councils in order to cultivate methods of shared decision-making and collaboration with parent communities in each LPS school.</p> <p>Continue collaboration with the Superintendent's Steering Committee to ensure diverse community stakeholders are engaged and providing feedback on district decisions.</p>



Strategic Planning Initiative: Developing the Five-Year Plan for the Lowell Public Schools

Four Visions from the Four Strategic Priorities:

Strategic Priority 1:

LPS will work with early education service providers within the community to better coordinate its approach to preschool through greater collaboration with community-based partners, and through the shared expertise of those partners, enjoy greater insight into how to best serve current and future LPS students.

Strategic Priority 2:

LPS will adopt organization-wide practices reflecting a consensus definition of high-quality that contemplates equitable access for all students regardless of linguistic background, disability, or economic circumstances and will ensure each LPS school is on a path of continuous improvement.

Strategic Priority 3:

LPS will develop and deliver secondary programming grounded in the knowledge and skills that 21st century global citizenship requires including the ability to effectively communicate, think critically, analyze unforeseen challenges, and think creatively about how to contribute to an interconnected, interdependent, competitive society.

Strategic Priority 4:

LPS will cultivate an appreciation for the unique educational opportunities available to LPS students attributable to the global community represented by Lowell's diversity, and through that appreciation, LPS will establish a steadfast bond of trust and confidence with the Lowell community at-large.